



home state health™

Show Me Healthy Kids

MANAGED BY HOME STATE HEALTH

WINTER 2026



## Winter Blues?

### Stay Happy and Healthy this Winter

Winter may lead to feeling “blue” due to less daylight and lack of outdoor fun. It may seem like the time of year when you are limited to indoor activities, like tv and movies. This can make you feel extra sad and down at times, but that is okay! Many kids and adults feel the same way during the long winter months. But don't worry, Winter can be a great time to think outside of the box and do some activities indoors and out, that can keep you active and feeling happy!

Getting outside in the sunlight can be the easiest way to feel good in the long, dark winter months. **As little as 15-20 minutes a day in natural light can improve mood and boost happiness** by helping the skin absorb vitamins, like Vitamin D! It also increases concentration, aids social and emotional development, increases physical activity and improves the senses (<https://childrenswi.org/at-every-turn/stories/2020/04/mental-health-benefits-outdoors>).



**HEY PARENTS!** Encourage kids and other family members to head outside this winter, even for a few minutes. Remember to check the weather and dress warmly to limit cold exposure.

If going outside is not an option due to weather or other circumstances, there are ways you can stay active indoors. Play hide and seek, stretch together as a family, do an interactive online video (with supervision) that includes dancing, yoga, or other physical activity, or find an indoor walking track in your community. All these things can ensure a healthy and happy winter!



### Winter Scavenger Hunt

Get outside and find these hidden items right in your own back yard!

- Cardinal bird
- Pine needles
- Brown leaf
- Squirrel
- Bird nest
- Stone
- Bare tree



**HIPPO FACT:** Hippos are considered the second largest land animal on Earth (first place goes to the elephant!). Males measure around 3.5m long and 1.5m tall, and can weigh up 3,200kg. That's as much as three small cars! [natgeokids.com/uk/discover/animals/general-animals/ten-hippo-facts](https://natgeokids.com/uk/discover/animals/general-animals/ten-hippo-facts)

## Homer's Heroes Spotlight

At **Springfield Dentistry 4 Kids**, children receive high-quality dental care in a fun, welcoming, and family-friendly environment—regardless of family income.

Caring for kids is their main focus, and their dentists dedicate the



entire day to treating the unique oral health needs of kids. From games in the lobby, to movies on the ceiling in treatment rooms, every detail of their office is designed to make children's dental visits comfortable and enjoyable.

They focus on creating positive dental experiences that build confidence and healthy habits. They also encourage parents to be involved in the appointment, helping both the child and parent feel at ease, with open communication and personalized support.

Springfield Dentistry 4 Kids proudly serves families across southwest Missouri, with an office location in Springfield and their new Joplin location coming later in 2026. They accept Medicaid and most major insurance plans and offer a discount membership club to ensure care is accessible to all families.

Springfield Dentistry 4 Kids is committed to community involvement, celebrating Children's Dental Health Month in February by donating \$1,000 in dental hygiene supplies to children in need through their Caring4Community initiative, along with visiting local schools, daycares, and community centers to teach children brushing techniques, the importance of flossing, and how to make tooth-friendly food choices.



Home State Health partnered with Springfield Dentistry 4 Kids in 2025 to host our first "Homer's Kids Club Kids Dental and Family Resource Fair" in Bolivar, MO, where we served children by providing dental exams and fluoride treatments on site, and connected them with other local resources like OACAC, Polk County Library, and Polk County Health Department.

### February is National Children's Dental Health Month

Homer wants to remind all his friends about the importance of brushing our teeth every day and seeing a pediatric dentist every six months for a check-up and cleaning.

### Remember the 2-2-2 Rule

- ▶ Brush 2 times a day
- ▶ Brush for 2 minutes
- ▶ Visit the dentist 2 times a year!



**LOOK FOR HOMER IN YOUR SCHOOL THIS YEAR!** Home State Health has partnered with the Missouri Office of Dental Health's Preventative Service Program, bringing **preventative dental services** to Missouri Children from the first tooth to seniors in high school. PSP offers oral health education, mouth reviews, and fluoride varnish and helps prevent cavities. Learn more at <https://health.mo.gov/living/families/oralhealth/psp/>.